

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOVERNOR AND FIRST LADY PRESENT STATE'S HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR TO SEVEN DISTINGUISHED NORTH CAROLINIANS

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley and First Lady Mary Easley today presented seven distinguished North Carolinians the prestigious North Carolina Award, the highest civilian honor the state can bestow. An awards committee selected the recipients in fine arts, literature, science and public service, from nominations submitted by the public.

“The North Carolina Awards recognize and celebrate creativity and innovation, two values which sustain our economy, our culture and our people,” said Easley. “I commend these distinguished poets, writers, journalists, scientists and public servants for having the vision and the determination to use their talents to make a difference in our state and throughout the world.”

Created by the General Assembly in 1961, the North Carolina Awards have been presented annually since 1964. More than 200 outstanding North Carolinians have been selected as recipients from citizens' nominations from across the state.

The 2006 N.C. Award winners are:

SCIENCE: Charles A. Sanders, M.D. of Durham has championed the importance of research to medical advancement as a cardiologist, as a professor, as an executive at major pharmaceutical companies and through his service on the boards of biotechnology firms. Sanders, who started the cardiac catheterization unit at Massachusetts General Hospital in 1962, became director of that hospital in 1972. His work in pharmaceutical research included positions at Squibb Corporation, and later as CEO of Glaxo, Inc. He also helped create the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation, which works to reduce infant mortality through education.

PUBLIC SERVICE: Thomas K. Hearn, Jr. of Winston-Salem has had a long and distinguished career as a teacher, scholar and administrator. As president of Wake Forest University, he led the transformation from a respected regional institution to a nationally prominent university. By his retirement in 2005, Hearn had served for 22 years, among the longest tenures for an American university president. The university has been consistently ranked in the top tier of

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